

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CENTO, TU

SUBJECT: CENTO LIAISON COMMITTEE MEETING

FOR STODDARD FROM INR/RNA

FOLLOWING IS ADDENDUM TO US SUBMISSION TO CENTO LIAISON
COMMITTEE. PLEASE TRANSMIT SOONEST TO COUNTER SUBVERSION
OFFICE STAFF FOR DISTRIBUTION TO MEMBERS OF LIAISON
COMMITTEE.

SECTION V

CONCLUSIONS AND PROJECTIONS

1. THE LIAISON COMMITTEE CONCLUDES AS FOLLOWS:
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(A) THE SOVIET UNION HAS NOT ALTERED ITS LONG-TERM AIM
OF GAINING INFLUENCE THROUGH THE SUPPORT OF RADICAL REGIMES
AND THE SUBVERSION OF MODERATE ONES. IT IS HAMPERED, HOW-
EVER, BY THE PROBLEM OF CONFLICTING NATIONAL OBJECTIVES
ON THE PART OF THE REGIMES IT HOPES TO INFLUENCE.

(B) IT REMAINS IN THE INTEREST OF THE SOVIET UNION TO
SUPPORT THE PRINCIPLE OF A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT TO THE
ARAB-ISRAELI DISPUTE. IN THIS WAY, THE USSR CAN HOPE TO
AVOID THE RISK OF A CONFRONTATION WITH THE US WHICH COULD
RESULT FROM ANOTHER ARAB-ISRAELI WAR. AT THE SAME TIME,

THE USSR AIMS TO ACHIEVE A SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN THE PROCESS OF NEGOTIATIONS THROUGH A RESUMPTION OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE, AND CONSEQUENTLY, IT OPPOSED FROM THE OUTSET PRESIDENT SADAT'S DIRECT CONTACTS WITH ISRAEL. A FINAL SETTLEMENT OF THE DISPUTE, HOWEVER, WOULD REMOVE AN ISSUE WHICH THE SOVIET UNION IS EXPLOITING TO PENETRATE AND INFLUENCE THE MIDDLE EAST.

(C) THE MASSIVE SOVIET ARMS BUILD-UP IN THE HORN OF AFRICA, THE INTRODUCTION OF LARGE NUMBERS OF CUBAN COMBAT TROOPS INTO ETHIOPIA, AND THE DETERIORATING SOMALI MILITARY EFFORT HAVE GENERATED INCREASING ALARM IN NEIGHBORING ARAB STATES, AS WELL AS IN THE TREATY AREA. THE SAUDIS, IN PARTICULAR, HAVE BECOME CONCERNED BY THE SITUATION EMERGING IN THE HORN AND FEAR THAT A SOVIET FOOTHOLD IN ETHIOPIA WOULD THREATEN THE ENTIRE SOUTHERN FLANK OF THE MIDDLE EAST. MOSCOW IS USING THE PRIVILEGED POSITION IT ENJOYS IN IRAQ AND THE PDRY TO INSURE THAT ITS MASSIVE AIRLIFT TO ETHIOPIA CAN PROCEED UNINHIBITED. AS A RESULT OF THE AIRLIFT AND A SIMULTANEOUS SEALIFT, ETHIOPIA HAS BEEN PROVIDED SUBSTANTIAL SOVIET MILITARY SECRET

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ASSISTANCE; THIS AND THE INJECTION OF SOVIET MILITARY ADVISORS AND CUBAN COMBAT TROOPS EVENTUALLY WILL GIVE ETHIOPIA A CLEAR MILITARY ADVANTAGE IN THE OGADEN.

(D) IRAQ AND PDRY HAVE NOT CHANGED THEIR FUNDAMENTAL AIMS OF FOSTERING SUBVERSION IN THE PERSIAN GULF, BUT NEITHER MADE MUCH HEADWAY IN 1977. THERE WERE NO NEW MAJOR THREATS TO THE STABILITY OF THE LOWER GULF DURING THE YEAR, BUT THE FLARE-UP OF A HISTORICAL BORDER DISPUTE BETWEEN OMAN AND RAS AL-KHAYMAH COULD PROVE DIFFICULT TO RESOLVE. SAUDI EFFORTS TO MODERATE SOUTH YEMEN'S RADICAL FOREIGN POLICY APPARENTLY HAVE COME TO NOTHING, PERHAPS AS A RESULT OF INCREASING SOVIET PRESSURE ON PDRY.

(E) THE INFLUENCE OF THE USSR IN EGYPT HAS DROPPED TO AN INSIGNIFICANT LEVEL, AND, BY VIRTUE OF ITS ASSISTANCE TO ETHIOPIA, MOSCOW HAS RUINED ITS RELATIONS WITH SOMALIA. SOVIET RELATIONS WITH SYRIA, STRAINED UNTIL RECENTLY OVER THE LEBANESE CIVIL WAR, HAVE REACHED A NEW HIGH AS THE RESULT OF RUSSIAN SUPPORT FOR ASSAD'S OPPOSITION TO THE SADAT PEACE INITIATIVE. MOSCOW HAS MANIFESTED ITS SUPPORT FOR SYRIA MAINLY BY INCREASING THE SUPPLY OF SOPHISTICATED WEAPONRY. DESPITE THIS IMPROVEMENT, THE USSR HAS SO FAR FAILED TO REPLACE, EITHER IN SYRIA OR LIBYA,

THE NAVAL FACILITIES LOST IN EGYPT, BUT IT HAS BEGUN TO PRESS FOR NEW FACILITIES IN ETHIOPIA AND PDRY. THE USSR ALREADY HAS OBTAINED TUNISIAN AGREEMENT TO ALLOW REPAIR OF SOVIET VESSELS IN MENGEL-BOURGUIBA.

(F) SOVIET ARMS SALES TO LIBYA CONTINUE ON A SCALE FAR ABOVE LIBYAN REQUIREMENTS. AS A RESULT, LIBYA REMAINS A POTENTIAL ARSENAL FOR OTHER RADICAL ARMIES. THERE HAVE BEEN REPORTS OF SIGNIFICANT TRANSFERS OF LIBYAN EQUIPMENT TO UGANDA, AND THE LIBYANS SUPPORT THE REBELS IN CHAD. THE SOVIET UNION ALSO CONTINUES TO PROVIDE SUB-SECRET

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STANTIAL MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND ECONOMIC AID TO ALGERIA, AFGHANISTAN, INDIA, IRAQ AND ETHIOPIA, AND, AS PREVIOUSLY NOTED, TO SYRIA.

(G) THE SOVIET UNION SUFFERED A MAJOR SETBACK IN ITS RELATIONS WITH INDIA WHEN IT OPENLY BACKED MRS. GANDHI'S LOSING ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN. WHILE MOSCOW FEARED THAT THE RELATIONSHIP HAD BEEN BADLY DAMAGED, THE DESAI GOVERNMENT'S ACKNOWLEDGED NEED FOR CONTINUING SOVIET MILITARY SUPPLY AND TRADE, AND FOREIGN MINISTER GROMYKO'S HURRIED TRIP TO INDIA IN APRIL, SERVED TO KEEP RELATIONS ON AN EVEN KEEL. SOVIET RELATIONS WITH AFGHANISTAN HAVE ALSO REMAINED GOOD. BOTH INDIA AND AFGHANISTAN HAVE IMPROVED THEIR TIES WITH PAKISTAN.

(H) LIBYA, PDRY, IRAQ AND (TO A LESS ACTIVE DEGREE) ALGERIA CONTINUE TO AID AND SUPPORT TERRORIST GROUPS. THESE COUNTRIES ALSO SUPPORT SUBVERSIVE ORGANIZATIONS THROUGHOUT THE AREA, AS DOES THE USSR AND CUBA.

PROJECTIONS

(1) SADAT'S BOLD INITIATIVE BREATHED NEW LIFE INTO THE FALTERING PEACE PROCESS, PARTICULARLY BY OVERCOMING SOME OF THE HITHERTO FORMIDABLE PSYCHOLOGICAL BARRIERS. EVEN SO, THE PROSPECTS FOR A COMPREHENSIVE MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT IN THE NEAR TERM APPEAR ONLY marginally BETTER BECAUSE THE POSITIONS OF THE PARTIES ON KEY SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES REMAIN FAR APART AND THE ARAB WORLD CONTINUES TO BE SHARPLY DIVIDED ON THE QUESTION OF PEACE WITH ISRAEL. TO MAINTAIN CREDIBILITY BOTH AT HOME AND IN THE ARAB WORLD, SADAT MUST BE ABLE TO DEMONSTRATE SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS OVER THE NEXT SIX MONTHS OR SO. IF SUFFICIENT SECRET

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MOMENTUM IN THE CURRENT PHASE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS IS MAINTAINED, THEN THE PROSPECTS OF AN EVENTUAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN EGYPT AND ISRAEL WOULD BE ENHANCED. IF THE PRESENT INITIATIVE FAILS, HOWEVER, WE CAN EXPECT SERIOUS REPERCUSSIONS IN THE REGION, INCLUDING THE POSSIBLE RE-

PLACEMENT OF SADAT BY A MORE RADICAL REGIME, DISILLUSIONMENT AND BITTERNESS ON THE PART OF THE ARAB MODERATES, AND THE STRENGTHENING OF REJECTIONIST AND SOVIET INFLUENCE.

(2) AS LONG AS THE ARAB-ISRAELI DISPUTE REMAINS UNSETTLED, THE MIDDLE EAST WILL BE UNSTABLE AND VULNERABLE TO SOVIET EXPLOITATION. ALTHOUGH THE SOVIET UNION VEHEMENTLY OPPOSES THE EGYPTIAN/ISRAELI TALKS INITIATED BY SADAT, IT WILL CONTINUE TO PROMOTE A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT THAT INCLUDES SOVIET PARTICIPATION IN THE PEACE PROCESS. THUS, THE SOVIET CAN BE EXPECTED TO FRUSTRATE ANY SETTLEMENT PROCESS THAT EXCLUDES THEM FROM EXERCISING DIRECT INFLUENCE AND LEVERAGE.

(3) IN AN EFFORT TO COMPENSATE FOR ITS LOSS OF INFLUENCE IN EGYPT AND TO DISCREDIT SADAT, WHOM IT VIEWS AS PURSUING AN ESSENTIALLY ANTI-SOVIET AND PRO-US POLICY IN THE AREA, THE USSR WILL CONTINUE TO SEEK EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO ENHANCE ITS INFLUENCE WITH ALGERIA, SYRIA, IRAQ, LIBYA, PDRY AND WITH THE PLO. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE SOVIETS WILL BE CAREFUL TO KEEP DIPLOMATIC LINES OPEN TO THE EGYPTIANS IN ORDER TO EXPLOIT QUICKLY ANY PERCEIVED FRUSTRATION OR DISILLUSIONMENT ON THE PART OF SADAT IF HE SHOULD CONCLUDE THAT HIS PRESENT POLICY INITIATIVES ARE DOOMED TO FAILURE.

(4) LEBANON WILL REMAIN A CHRONIC PROBLEM AREA CHARACTERIZED BY A HIGH LEVEL OF VIOLENCE, ESPECIALLY IF THE PROSPECTS FOR RECONCILIATION FADE AND THE SECURITY SECRET

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SITUATION WORSENS AS THE RESULT OF GROWING LEBANESE/ SYRIAN HOSTILITY, MUTUAL DISTRUST AMONG THE VARIOUS FACTIONS, AND THE LARGE ARMED PALESTINIAN PRESENCE.

(5) IRAQ AND LIBYA, AND TO A LESSER EXTENT PDRY AND ALGERIA, ARE LIKELY TO CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE TERRORIST AND SUBVERSIVE ORGANIZATIONS, ESPECIALLY REJECTIONIST PALESTINIAN GROUPS, WHICH ARE DEDICATED TO SABOTAGING BY ALL POSSIBLE MEANS ANY NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT OF THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT.

(6) ANY INCREASE IN THE SOVIET AND CUBAN PRESENCE IN SOUTH YEMEN, AS WELL AS ELSEWHERE IN THE MIDDLE EAST, MUST BE CAREFULLY MONITORED. IF THE SAUDIS WERE TO CONCLUDE THAT THE COMBINED SOVIET/CUBAN PHYSICAL PRESENCE CONSTITUTED A SECURITY THREAT TO THEIR SOUTHERN BORDER, WE CAN NOT EXCLUDE THE POSSIBILITY OF A PREEMPTIVE SAUDI MILITARY STRIKE AGAINST PDRY.

(7) BECAUSE SAUDI ARABIA AND THE ARAB GULF STATES HAVE

SYSTEMS THAT SO FAR HAVE DEMONSTRATED THEIR ABILITY TO ACCOMMODATE CHANGE AND TO CONTROL RADICAL INFLUENCES, THE PROSPECTS FOR CONTINUED PEACE AND STABILITY IN THE GULF ARE FAVORABLE. SHORT OF ANOTHER ARAB/ISRAELI WAR, THE SAUDIS HAVE TOO LARGE A STAKE IN THE HEALTH OF THE WESTERN ECONOMY TO DISRUPT OIL SUPPLIES, ALTHOUGH TERRORIST ACTION COULD CAUSE A SERIOUS SHORT TERM DISRUPTION OF THE OIL FLOW.

(8) ALTHOUGH SUBSTANTIAL ARAB AID IS CURRENTLY FLOWING TO SOMALIA, THE MODERATE ARAB STATES, LED BY EGYPT AND SAUDI ARABIA, WILL PROBABLY CONCENTRATE THEIR EFFORTS IN THE MONTHS AHEAD ON ACHIEVING A DIPLOMATIC, AS OPPOSED
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TO A MILITARY, SOLUTION OF THE SOMALI/ETHIOPIAN CONFLICT.

(9) THE POSSIBILITY OF THE SOVIET UNION EXPLOITING ITS INFLUENCE IN AFGHANISTAN TO THE DETRIMENT OF PAKISTAN, AND OF A SWING TO THE LEFT IF DAOUD DIES OR IS OVERTHROWN, NEEDS TO BE CAREFULLY WATCHED.

(10) SOVIET NAVAL ACTIVITY IN THE INDIAN OCEAN, PARTICULARLY ALONG THE LITTORAL OF THE HORN OF AFRICA AND THE ARABIAN PENINSULA, ALSO SHOULD BE KEPT UNDER SCRUTINY.
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